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**New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in
implementation and international support**

**Letter dated 21 January 2011 from the Permanent Representative
of Benin to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to draw your attention to the information below.

In 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, a number of African countries have been marking the fiftieth anniversary of their nations' independence. In that context, Benin organized an international symposium bringing together representatives of a number of Member States of the United Nations, on the topic, "Audacity, unique challenge for a new Africa". The symposium was held in Cotonou, from 16 to 20 November 2010.

The symposium adopted a far-reaching and historic outcome document entitled "The Fiftieth Anniversary Manifesto".

Please find herewith the symposium materials (see annex), which could serve to inspire the efforts of the international community to help the countries of Africa overcome the legacy of the past and achieve international development goals.

They are of some interest under item 62 of the agenda of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, relating to Africa's development.

The Government of Benin would be very grateful if the materials of the symposium could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Jean-Francis R. Zinsou
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 21 January 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Benin to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Fiftieth Anniversary Manifesto

"And if we're going to rise out of this, don't you see that we must brace ourselves, tense our muscles, clench our teeth and keep our heads — ah yes, our heads — cool and clear! I speak to you, gentlemen, of a rising the likes of which has never been seen before, and woe to the one whose foot falters!"

This warning, addressed to Africa in 1966 by Aimé Césaire, at a time when the "sun of independence" was nearing its zenith, resonates today with particular urgency. It calls for a surge of strength, in a world undergoing profound change, with Africa the focus of many questions, but also of hope.

1. Witnesses to history and active on the world stage today, we have come from every corner of Africa and the world and gathered here in Cotonou, Benin, from 16 to 20 November 2010 and, as the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of independence draws to a close, we shall take away with us the idea that **audacity remains the only challenge for a new Africa.**
2. Like all the peoples in the world, **we, too, have emerged from the depths and furthest reaches** of human history.
3. **We have experienced the tragedy** of humiliation, and that of our own failures. But we have also experienced triumphs of intelligence and victories over ourselves.
4. **Throughout these 50 years, our mission should have been to struggle for the emancipation** of society vis-à-vis the authorities and for the emancipation of men and women and to build more egalitarian human relations. The African intelligentsia has not always been equal to this task.
5. The liberation struggles have painfully brought forth the Africa of today, and despite the myriad reasons that we have to bemoan our fate, we recognize that this freedom, whether achieved through armed struggle or granted in a duplicitous way, has opened up new horizons for all.
6. None of us lives any longer in the world of our parents. This is why, in the aftermath of the commemorations that have been held in various places during this fiftieth anniversary period, we declare that this is the time for Africa to take stock of itself and of its history, an hour of truth which concerns the continent as a whole.
7. In the name of this truth, we venture to acknowledge that Africa is doing very, very poorly indeed. The sole option open to us is to gird our loins and surge towards salvation in this eleventh hour, fortifying ourselves with positive values that leave no room for mediocrity and fatalism. This alone will allow our continent to avoid the chaos that lies in wait.
8. This is why today Africa is exhorted to chart new paths of freedom and development.
9. **Uniting Africa in a Federation of the United States of Africa is a priority goal.** Today we will revive hope in international cooperation, cooperation

experienced and managed in a different way, such that it will favour the large mass of Africans who have been ill-served by independence "granted" to areas which have been balkanized, split up or fragmented.

10. **Our internal market of consumers, over 1 billion strong,** remains the best option for the profitable manufacture and exchange of goods for all the States on the continent. **We must promote cooperation which builds the capacity to manage this internal African market.** The private sector is the weak link in African economies. The time has come to put an end to disabling State practices and support a strong, competitive private sector capable of competing in the current context of globalization.

11. **We believe in an independent, sovereign and united Africa. We believe that** it has an unrivalled place in the world. **We believe** in the major issues at stake for which Africa stands, due both to its outstanding mineral and natural wealth and to the cultural diversity of its immense human potential. **We believe** in the outstanding contribution it has to make to the conversation.

12. This fiftieth anniversary of independence is also an opportunity for collective affirmation by all the generations and countries of Africa together, that **what is essential for the future of a people is its capacity to value the human being in all its dimensions.** On the path of development in the twenty-first century, no region of the world should feel that it can tell Africa what to do. It has been endowed with special riches. Notwithstanding our wounds, our vulnerabilities and our doubts, our men and women, our fabulous wealth and our cultures represent resources which are equal to our striving as a continental Power. We will make our due contribution, to ourselves and to humanity, and to the construction of a civilized process of globalization with a human face.

13. We have drawn upon the cultures of East and West. We, in turn, offer the opportunity to all other peoples to draw upon ours. Human development has everything to gain by promoting appreciation of traditional cultures, the sciences, the arts, various forms of spirituality and literature in State diplomacy. **Africa can introduce a multicultural dimension into international bodies.** Black writers and artists invited us to do so back in 1956, at the First International Congress of Black Writers and Artists, when Alioune Diop said: "World culture is of concern to us, regardless of whether we have access to modern amenities ... The great issues must be available to all minds, and all forms of cultural originality must be available to everyone ..."

14. For Africa truly to take off economically, it is urgently necessary to build regional groupings. Development flows from an economic and monetary environment conducive to investment. Over the last 50 years in Africa, numerous analyses, expert assessments and studies have evaluated currency experiments carried out in various parts of the continent. **Today we say that the time has come to take the leap, in full awareness of our action, to hasten the formation of regional monetary areas with a view to creating an African monetary area.**

15. The classification of countries as least developed or as heavily indebted poor countries results in specific aid conditions that should not be seen as panaceas to be perpetuated but rather as a device for the subjugation of countries which should be ended. Most of the countries thus classified are African. **The new course set by the fiftieth anniversary will have one goal: to reduce as soon as possible, through**

economic vigilance and discipline, the number of African countries thus stigmatized.

16. **The challenges which remain are huge. The unfinished tasks before us are immense:** peace and security, health, education, scientific and technological research, management of towns and the countryside, more effective use of our land through an appropriate agricultural policy that will restore food sovereignty to Africa, safeguarding the environment, judicial reform, training and employment, culture, the promotion of African languages, etc.

17. With regard to governance, the picture presented by our countries is disturbing in a number of ways. Lies, manipulation, corruption, murder, dictatorship, the gravest breaches of civil liberties, human rights violations, impunity, nepotism and the accompanying excesses and other staggering abuses have become the order of the day. Civil society itself is being undermined by such reprehensible practices as cheating, fraud and an unbridled quest for personal advancement. As for the media, there is a strong temptation to yield to the power of money and the appeal of easy profits, and, in doing so, to sacrifice the public's right to fair and balanced information.

18. **The solutions will come primarily** from us, the men and women of Africa determined to assume our responsibilities. Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, half a century after the achievement of political independence, we want to build **an Africa which is bold, fair and prosperous**, fuelled by peaceful dialogue among its multiple identities and fully aware of its role in meeting the challenges of globalization.

19. **With the world geopolitical system in a process of redefinition, our continent must take stock of itself** and the need to build its own modernity. The dual question of democratization and sustainable economic progress is being posed at a profound historic and strategic level for Africa. Africa has the wherewithal to take a central position in the international community and to respond with dignity to the responsibilities which fall to it with regard to its history, its material resources and the mobilization of its human capacities.

20. **We do not aspire to enforce an untried development model.** We will see to it, however, that no abrupt shift occurs which could hamper democratic advances, scientific development, social and economic progress and promotion of the cultural values which constitute the essential soil which nourishes all human enterprise and represent the ultimate goal of all development.

21. The deadlock resulting from the crisis of the twenty-first century's dominant growth models raises the question of the interconnection between life's human and social aspects. **In our turn, we shall not shirk the responsibility of contributing a solution** to this question. We will have the intelligence to take on board perceptions unimagined by the dominant economies while reconstituting our knowledge, our certainties and our heritages in a new light, in order to fortify all our economic and political development initiatives with the capacity, at all times, to create something human.

22. **We will set our minds to** reconsidering our own riches, questioning our conformity to the dominant model and assessing our partnerships by considering all the existing paradigms. This assessment, and the abrupt shifts in direction that will ensue, should allow us to journey along our extraordinary path in the community of

nations. Other continents which were once colonized and subjugated have navigated such shifts. So this is possible, by dint of vision, hard work and determined will.

23. **We cannot ignore the emergence of new protagonists** and new, increasingly influential centres of decision-making which have changed the geopolitical order and which are pushing their way into the international arena. These new stakeholders, who are broadening our horizons, are investing massively in our continent, in search of raw materials and new markets. **In response to this new challenge, we must intelligently define a new, coordinated governance strategy for all our partnerships.**

24. **The home-grown priority of creating millions of jobs and producing goods** must define inter-African relations, and also relations with the countries of the North and these new stakeholders. **We also want this priority of Africa's vital interests to be officially adopted as a governance strategy and to be effectively included in the daily practice of our States.**

25. **We consider the solidarity of the historical and recent diaspora to be one of the factors stimulating the policy of Africa's home-grown development. This diaspora is now equal to one sixth of the continent's population.** The weight of its contribution, especially its financial contribution, is essential for Africa's development.

26. For ourselves, in the interest of our populations, we must do our utmost to **achieve the Millennium Development Goals. This is not so much a question of achieving a standard of development as one of ensuring that individual and collective aspirations are fully realized.**

27. In this regard, continuing to improve quality of life is a central challenge. **Health and environmental protection** must be placed front and centre. Our respectful treatment of nature, our cultural heritage and our sense of community are exceptional assets that we must carefully preserve. By the same token, **education for all, girls and boys, remains a priority.** More than that, starting now, we must **affirm loud and clear** that everyone must enjoy the benefits of education, both as individuals and as communities. **In the same vein, we insist that all the women of Africa, toiling tirelessly to build the future of our continent and the world on a daily basis,** must enjoy the respect for their physical inviolability that stems from their status as the mothers of us as individuals and of humankind, that they assume a place which accords due prominence to that role, that they take up positions of decision-making and responsibility in large numbers and that they benefit from the fruits of a system of governance which treats them with human dignity.

28. African languages are the bedrock of Africa's human heritage. **We want them to become a systematic part of school curricula, to be taught** at all levels of education and to serve as a medium in all information and communication technologies. The influence of Africa in the world depends on Africans taking ownership of their languages.

29. In this year 2010, which the African Union has proclaimed the Year of Peace and Security in Africa, we, prime movers in politics and society, economic and intellectual leaders, cultural and media personalities, **will, thanks to a culture of dialogue, mobilize all the necessary resources** for the prevention, early warning, mediation and resolution of inter-ethnic conflicts and political confrontation. Our priority is to put an end to the proliferation of harmful and criminal breaches of law

and the repeated tragedies which, replaying themselves again and again and bringing advances on the continent to a grinding halt, discredit us severely.

30. **We call upon our political leaders, both those in power and those in the opposition,** to build their capacity for consultation, negotiation, reconciliation and decision-making to promote increased diversity in key positions of authority. This requirement will bring together the conditions for a **genuine solidarity contract** among all social partners, from the highest levels to the grass roots. What is at stake here is public ownership and acceptance of development policies.

31. Ethics have been restored to the agenda and must be considered a watershed factor with relation to public policy over the last 50 years. **Ethics and responsibility must be at the heart of Africa's second 50 years and its development.** The economy will unquestionably need ethics in its endeavour to stem extreme poverty and create a **minimum shared standard of social welfare for the benefit of the most needy.**

32. As a whole, Africa has not made the technological and scientific leap necessary to position itself for modern competition. The flow of talent from our continent, rightly termed brain drain, is swelling the scientific capacity of foreign countries and depriving Africa of a major asset. **We want a bold and coordinated science policy to staunch this massive outflow at the continental level.** Actions to be taken by the public authorities and especially by heads of State under such a policy would include funding training and research initiatives to keep our scientists in Africa and creating conditions to promote the return and integration of our students sent abroad to study or those who take jobs abroad once they have completed their studies.

33. Following on the great figures of the historical black diaspora, fathers of scientific inventions which have revolutionized the world, **we dare to dream** that Africa will bring science and technology back into its fold. **In order to do that, we must create a network linking African women and men of science scattered throughout the world** who are already involved in technology-sharing with their continent, or bolster such networks where they already exist.

34. So far, the continent's achievements and efforts have passed barely noticed. **Africa has lifted its head unseen.** However, it has at its disposal impressive resources of theoretical knowledge and technical, scientific and technological know-how in its territory, where, even in the most precarious material conditions, people are demonstrating every day of their lives their ability to adapt traditional knowledge and to spur scientific innovation, through the swift assimilation of information and communication technologies and in the use of biodiversity resources.

35. **We want new or continued recognition for inventors and innovators in all fields of development, through the awarding of national, regional and pan-African prizes.**

36. A continent of symbols, and a continent which gives things new meaning, Africa is an international presence in all areas of art and culture. Contemporary African art has made its mark in the great art galleries of the world.

37. **History has always been written and illustrated by the victors. Africa has begun writing and illustrating its own. We want awards to be established,**

everywhere where they do not yet exist, to encourage and reward literary and artistic creation so that Africa can at last tell its own story.

38. Africa's destiny is linked to the destiny of the world. **Now that we have achieved independence, we must build and manage our interdependencies more intelligently, in a way that gives due prominence to humanity.**

39. **We do not forget where we set out from or the trials suffered by those who have gone before us,** Africans both prominent and anonymous, trampled underfoot and often summarily executed, all those to whom we owe our independence.

40. Inveterate dreamers, our forefathers had no illusions about the ambiguous circumstances in which our countries achieved independence. **But in this independence they saw not an end in itself but rather an initial surge,** a first step towards the achievement of higher ends. **Without them, decolonization would never have occurred.**

41. **We must unceasingly recall that nowhere has the march towards independence been an easy one.** It is crucial for us to remember that Patrice Lumumba, Félix-Roland Moumié, Ernest Ouandié, Dedan Kimathi, Amílcar Cabral and many others died in terrible conditions for our sake and for the sake of our children.

42. The fiftieth anniversary is also an occasion to **express our tremendous gratitude** to the thinkers of great stature and courageous men of action whose names are forever engraved in the hearts and minds of Africans for all generations to come: Cheikh Anta Diop, Frantz Fanon, Alioune Diop, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Agostino Neto, Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Nelson Mandela, Mongo Beti and Wole Soyinka, to mention just a few among dozens of others, whose voices we are now no longer able to heed in these times of inertia, when a lack of audacity seems to have penetrated as far as our memories and our souls. Raising their voices in chorus in a magnificent hymn to the dignity of the African man, they have embodied the dream of an Africa standing upright, fully itself, speaking in its own voice and contributing its genius to the development and the humanization of our planet.

43. **We commit ourselves to making sure that this History is taught to all African children, starting in primary school, from generation to generation.**

44. **Heirs of today, it is up to you, the young, to take up the torch,** to hold it aloft and raise it ever higher, to let it warm your hearts, mould your intelligence and fortify your will.

45. All these heroes of African independence pass on to you now the duty of bearing witness to these events and enjoin you to continue the work they have begun. **In the very near future, Africans will shed tears of joy to see their dreams made real, and that will be thanks to you.**

46. All leaders are accountable to History for their actions. **And it is for this reason that you are entitled to ask for an accounting.** But the passage of time and the urgent issues of the day summon you to this task already. In terms of their valour and self-sacrifice, your elders have fallen short of the historical legacy of those heroes who liberated the black man from slavery and colonization.

47. **You say "no" to the exploitation to which you have been subjected. You demand the right to speak your piece. You seek your place and an identity between modernity and the ancestral practices you hope to find liberating. You aspire to a productive fellowship with your elders to fashion new, sturdy bonds around the old ones, tying you together.**

48. We would not want the flame that our fathers carried to be extinguished in our hands, the flame which goes by the names **Sacrifice, Patriotism, Work Ethic and Discipline, Self-Denial and Ethics as a code of conduct.**

49. *"The hour of ourselves has sounded". This means that we undertake to work with everyone so that what seemed to us intolerable yesterday is no longer considered insurmountable today.*

50. **We are emerging, decisive and upright,** from the obscurity of the past 50 years. We, men and women of Africa and the diaspora, who have come together here in the African land of Benin, on this Saturday, 20 November 2010, **do hereby proclaim** our commitment to take bold initiatives, to espouse, over the 50 years to come, a culture of peace, discipline and sustained work, for stepped-up development based on the sense of our burgeoning humanity.

51. We decide to put an end to our destiny of obscurity and effacement. We reaffirm the audacity of our unity and of our rebirth.

Cotonou, 20 November 2010

International symposium: Audacity, the only challenge for a new Africa

General report

Fifty years have gone by. And we had to call a halt. To halt and scan the drab and dreary vistas of all the opportunities we missed.

What have we achieved with our supposed talents? What has become of our dreams of freedom, grandeur and rebirth? Heaven knows we weren't wrong to dream. Since, by nature's design, Africa is the cradle of humanity, we could legitimately dream of it becoming, in the natural order of things, a land of plenty and shared well-being.

True, our dreams did not come to pass, becoming mired in a swampland of nightmares. True, the infant that let out his first wail on that radiant day in 1960 has since grown, but did so with sorrow and scarcity as its loincloth and the uncertainty of tomorrow as its future. With nothing to look forward to, he resigned with mute desperation to a life of living from hand to mouth. Over time, the beautiful lyrics of our national anthems, to the ears of the average person, have become nothing but a murmur of melodious lies and lying melodies.

So that is where Africa stands fifty years later. Here we are: often naked, perpetually penniless, knocking on every door on the world's charity circuit. Such is our meagre and stunted fifty-year inheritance! Some of our younger citizens do not recognize themselves in it, rejecting it. They cannot accept this legacy.

Still, this is a time for awakening, not for regrets. There has been no failure, strictly speaking. In truth, we learn from everything we do. The time has come for upstanding men and women to accept personal responsibility. They want more than bit parts to play on history's stage. They want to become pilots hardened by experience, and steer their own life.

So here you are, ready to make the world listen up. This is not just the title of some symposium, being held from 16 to 20 of November 2010 in Cotonou. This is our rallying cry:

"Audacity, the only challenge for a new Africa"

Buttressed by the bedrock of their audacity, you, men and women of good will, of friendship and fraternity, from every corner of the world, steadfast in your faith, have gathered here to raise four massive pillars to serve as milestones along the new roads of the new Africa.

First milestone: the audacity to confess and break free

We must, first and foremost, hold up a mirror and see ourselves for who we are. We must concede that Africa has committed many mistakes over the past fifty years.

- We have committed the error of mimicry, turning ourselves into talking parrots and performing monkeys. Many of us have thus sidestepped, and continue to sidestep, our identity.

- From the outset, we have looked inward and lacked the necessary openness and prescience, exposing ourselves to the dangers of cultural nationalism with its tendency to exclude others and nurture insularity.
- We have served as unthinking auxiliaries in wars and been the irresponsible pyromaniacs that fuelled open and simmering conflicts, banishing peace from a number of regions on the African continent. We have instituted the law of the jungle, deluding ourselves that *"might makes right"*.
- If only we could argue that our backwardness over the past fifty years was due to our late start. It is tempting to try and find at what point in time the so-called "emerging" countries surged ahead of us, with their manifestly more dynamic labour markets.
- If we are going to care about time, then in all our endeavours, timeliness is of the essence. It makes us the masters of our time and helps us to manage it in our best interest. Should there not be a time for everything? Science, at least, needs time for progress and discovery. But our time is not eternal; eternity is God's domain.
- We have severely undermined the environment in which our elections take place. Ever since accepting the prevailing idea that "elections are held to be won", nothing and no one can "watch" the "watchmen". That, in turn, throws open the floodgates of excess and abuse.
- We have often manipulated and tampered with our founding documents, betraying our foremost obligations for the sake of repugnant interests that we are loath even to admit.
- And who could deny our many sins in addressing the fundamental tasks of development, letting ideological inflexibility, parochialism and bias guide our questionable decisions.

"However long the night, the dawn will break", says the African proverb. But on what condition will the dawn break for the desired transformation to impose itself as the rightful corollary to the audacity to break free?

- The African people have to search within themselves for their true nature. Victor Hugo was right, when he said: "Imitate nothing and no one. A lion that mimics another lion becomes a monkey."
- Peace is the most fertile soil for our development. We must also convince ourselves that peace in Africa must reach beyond the cemeteries to the world of the living. We need peace that grows with each day through dialogue, the healthy confrontation of ideas and plans, and the acceptance of diversity. As Walter Lippmann taught us: "Where all think alike, no one thinks very much."
- You did not feel compelled to ignore the body of ancestral practices that challenge the workings of the modern State. Let's leave our preconceptions behind: these practices represent, in many respects, a trove of knowledge that may prove useful. Let us examine and inventory these practices, create suitable environments and spaces for their manifestation, which will help draw them out of obscurity and enable practitioners to make the best possible use of their knowledge by patenting it and thus play their part in development.

- Rediscovering eternal Africa through our intrinsic values offers the first good answer to our varied quests. To our quest for "miraculous weapons", in the words of Aimé Césaire, which we still need to discover before we can make a decisive and redeeming break with the past! In Africa, where humanism in its deeper sense of respect for all that is human, was not a word devoid of meaning, the experience of "otherness" has been a positive one.
- This means that we must break with ideology-driven education and social sciences. They plant the seed of ethnocide that gives rise to the abominations that have become all too familiar to us. We must break with the idea that the "other" is an enemy that must be fought with every means possible and wiped from the face of the earth. We must break with pre-packaged ideas and internationally accepted notions according to which we are condemned to living in poverty, when Africa is not in fact poor, but impoverished.
- We must build fair and democratic societies that coalesce to create a strong and organized civil society, to bring forth an African culture of inclusion, diversity and dialogue.
- Self-examination must manifest itself in everything we do, bring us to self-awareness and drive us to action. How did the cradle of humanity become the dumping ground of the world? Why has the continent endowed with the world's greatest riches surrendered to poverty and misery? Nietzsche said "Man is only consumed with that which causes him pain, great pain, and accelerates the irruption of his spirit."
- Pan-Africanism, despite its history of fits and starts, should be seen as an opportunity for Africa. We already know that the movement of people and goods contributes to progress. This needs to be supplemented by the movement of ideas, so that Africans can finally invest in the asset with the greatest returns: intelligence.
- Lastly, we must keep ethics at the heart of all our efforts. Ethics must accompany and guide our every undertaking. Ultimately, everything hinges on ethics. We all know that science without conscience is nothing but ruin to the soul. We must recognize that development that does not generate a shared well-being will keep Africans from being the masters of their own garden.

Second milestone: the audacity of science and its countless applications

You have rightly noted Africa's many weaknesses that hamper its development and constrain the development of science. In no particular order:

- Big-picture thinking is absent from the highest echelons of our Governments. This leads to special interests being backed by international and multinational organizations.
- Intellectual discourse is absent. This has stemmed the flow of ideas.
- Individuals have a strong tendency to identify with the State.
- African elites have a strong feeling of superiority over the rest of the population.
- National laws and educated society are not favourable to national languages, while foreign languages have hijacked their official language status. Because

they are not used in administration or knowledge sharing, national languages have been relegated to the role of languages of folklore.

- Infrastructure to support research and the distribution of scientific works is generally lacking.
- African languages are almost entirely absent from the Internet.
- Environmental impact studies are non-existent.
- There is little interest in centres of scientific excellence, which need new energy and support.
- Political leaders are not supportive of African scientists.

In the light of all this, what is to be done? What needs to be put right for science to become the driving force of African development? In responding to these questions, you have made two sets of recommendations.

First, taking the wide-angle approach:

- Scientific information must be made available and accessible.
- It was an African who invented "indicametrics", the holistic study of objective and subjective indicators. This deserves to be better known to all, Africans especially.
- Teachers in our classrooms and universities must be versed in indigenous knowledge.
- We must learn from past failures and successes in order to develop new approaches that are free from the perpetual new beginnings and proliferation of programmes designed for Africans by outsiders.
- Knowledge and skills developed in Africa must be promoted by giving them legal protection on the international level and ensuring that the communities which possess them derive broad and sustainable benefit from these assets.
- Legislation must be adopted to raise the legal status of national languages in order to make them the languages of instruction, education and scientific learning.
- A platform must be created for the dissemination of information and exchange of ideas at the continental level using information and communication technology.
- Researchers must be involved in preparatory work for the development of a research budget and their efforts encouraged through the promotion of their work.
- Prominence must be given to the findings of numerous studies of undeniable quality.

You also made recommendations for specific fields.

1. Food security

- African farmers must be given the sound training and good nutrition that they need to gain the status of farmer entrepreneurs.

- Support must be given to the green revolution initiatives, such as those of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

2. Science, technology and innovation

- Science and technology must be improved, promoted and elevated to the top levels of government to ensure its funding, management and protection.
- Regional institutions must be set up and developed, particularly in advanced technological fields such as nuclear energy, nanotechnology, biotechnology, etc.
- The registration of patents and intellectual property by African researchers at home and abroad should be encouraged.
- Encouragement and support should be provided to education and research institutions in the form of tax breaks.

3. Research and centres of scientific excellence

- Research should be used as a foundation for development.
- Decisions should be based on scientific findings, thereby reducing the role of politics.

4. Information and communication

- The legal status of national languages should be raised.
- Means of communication should be developed to build ties between all contributors to science and technology, national and pan-African centres of excellence, researchers and local communities.
- Innovative sources of funding should be identified that make the most of private-public partnerships, encourage the dissemination and sharing of knowledge, including traditional knowledge and research findings, and foster synergy in the African model of development.

5. State and private sector

- Heads of State must assert their commitment to promoting scientific and technological research and innovation.
- Networks must be forged between researchers and research centres in West Africa and on the African continent.

Third milestone: the audacity of action and conquest

You have asserted your strong and firm resolve to reject anything that holds Africa back on its path to development.

You also say:

- No to a balkanized Africa, outrageously scarred by borders inherited from the colonial period;

- No to a wasteful Africa that squanders its greatest asset, its people, by giving them questionable education and training;
- No to an Africa that still does not know how candidly to broach the challenging and delicate matter of a single African currency. No to an Africa that settles for the coexistence of different currencies of which very few are traded;
- No to an Africa that still does not know how to get the most out of its agriculture. No to an Africa that lets excessive politicking prevent concerted action from reaching its objective and playing its role;
- No to an Africa that continues to undervalue three key groups in its development: women, youth and the African diaspora.

But who will lead this much-needed charge? What form will it take? What conquests still lie ahead of us before Africa can regain its freedom and its creativity?

- Reject balkanization and remember, and let no one else forget, that Africa was not born in Berlin, when imperial powers redrew the continent with a few strokes of the pen. As for integration, the people have already beaten their Governments to the task, demonstrating the need to unify Africa starting with its foundation: its vibrant human communities.
- Instead, we must harness ourselves to build far-reaching, strong economies; school and university systems with a subregional focus; and dynamic and complementary economies that favour the co-management of goods and sharing of resources. We must harmonize and adopt convergent policies to optimize migratory flows, wage an effective battle against endemic diseases, and do all this in a spirit of cross-border cooperation that furthers the cross-border concept of local integration.
- We must have the audacity bravely to undertake the task of creating a common currency by mobilizing all our intellectual resources and by drawing on our own experiences. One thing is inescapably clear: Africa must eventually mint its own money. This is about sovereignty and the survival of our continent in a world governed by the implacable laws of natural selection. These laws, as we well know, leave no room for the weak.
- But Africa will not attain this stage of development without implementing, starting now, policies to redress the macroeconomic situation, encourage macroeconomic convergence, and, above all, to increase and improve output, so as to provide a solid foundation for the single currency of the future.
- You were right to focus on the topic of agriculture. It is and continues to be one of the driving forces of the new Africa. Agriculture must be modernized. It must develop using a new framework that allows for public-private partnerships. It must gear its production to meet the needs of the market, whether local, regional or international.
- Concerning the development of our human assets, you have called for revitalized, modernized vocational training focused on sectors that contribute to development.
- Similarly, you have argued that personal enterprise is a vehicle for the creation of wealth. You stipulated that it must maintain its connection to education and

free itself of certain risks, that it needs skilled and professional entrepreneurs on whom it can rely and needs access to regional markets, which must undergo daring reforms that will require foresight on the part of the State, the private sector and development partners.

- You told us that entrepreneurship in Africa does not work without the advancement of the private sector, which needs a healthy legal and administrative environment to grow. We must protect investments and reassure investors.
- Concerning the role of women, youth and the African diaspora, you have made some valuable recommendations.
- First, with regard to women: In order to end the social injustice responsible for the scant recognition that they have received for their contribution to grass-roots development and their virtual absence from the ranks of decision makers, we need the audacity to use the progress made in legal and institutional spheres as leverage in righting the imbalances in gender roles. To that end, we need to reassess issues of general health, especially reproductive health, schooling, instruction, training and more generally the education of girls and boys. We must also recognize the work and contribution of women, their ability to fend for themselves during times of conflict, war and violence. Breaking with the past, you said, involves creating a favourable social climate and taking formal steps towards attainment of this goal.
- To correct these imbalances you made no fewer than 14 recommendations, which have been included with the conclusions of the third panel annexed to the present general report. These recommendations are intended for both national Governments and the African Union.
- Next, our youth, whose heartfelt appeal has touched every participant of this symposium.
- Our youth, seeking to make decisions by and for themselves, do not want to be manipulated any longer.
- Our youth, anxious to contribute their share of truth to the social debate, want to make their voices heard.
- Our youth, knowing that they will have to pick up where we leave off — or, as the proverb has it, that a new rope is plaited at the end of the old — want to embark on an intergenerational dialogue at the national and continental levels, a dialogue between them and their elders.
- Finally, our youth, knowing their place, role and responsibilities in the new Africa, want to be useful in every sphere of activity: health, education, economy, rule of law and human rights, among others.
- Lastly, the diaspora. The new diaspora could make a more tangible economic contribution by establishing a genuine savings and investment bank. The diaspora's contribution, in every field, is useful and invaluable for the construction of the new Africa. The old, historic diaspora must benefit from the enactment of the resolution on right of return of the descendants of enslaved Africans adopted at the World Conference against Racism in Durban.

Similarly, a welcome programme should be implemented to help those who voluntarily return to Africa from the Americas, the Caribbean or Europe.

Fourth milestone: the triumph of shared victories

Success needs fertile ground to take root and prosper. You have sought to examine this ground, to diagnose it, in order to help us grasp the purpose and the significance of our current and future achievements within the scope of North-South and South-South partnerships.

You have identified several obstacles that have hindered our desire to do good:

- The persisting imbalance between stated intentions and available financial resources;
- The inability of the countries in the north to take on board Africa's new priorities;
- The challenge facing African leaders in the new world order in the adoption of new, suitable attitudes and behaviours that break with the mimicry and borrowings of the past;
- The inability of African economies, which were once at the same level in the 1960s as the so-called "Asian dragons", to find the stamina and rhythm to rise to the top;
- By depriving the African continent of home-grown initiatives, the Bretton Woods institutions and the European Union have marginalized it and excluded it from globalization;
- The endless visa troubles facing Africans seeking to emigrate to the West;
- Similar difficulties encountered between African States which are jeopardizing subregional integration.

Faced with this diagnosis, you have made the following recommendations and proposals:

- African States need to distance themselves from their painful past and to turn their backs on dubious forms of solidarity. In the course of its development, the African continent must be at minimum a co-pilot and never a mere passenger.
- Ambition must push Africans towards development and be fuelled by a fierce determination to find the means to attain world-class performance in every field.
- African leaders must conduct a strategic analysis, based on the realities of Africa, to reposition the continent's role in the world.
- Innovative leadership must be promoted in Africa, a leadership that has the audacity to spurn mimicry. Such leadership must, for example, build a model of governance that centres on substantial, visible and inspiring achievements. Furthermore, this leadership must take the realities on the ground into account while fostering new mindsets.
- Similarly, African elites must implement innovative mechanisms that are reinforced by good governance and zero tolerance for corruption.

- In the North-South partnership, Africa must henceforth count on its own strengths and expand the partnership to match the scale of development cooperation. It must encompass all aspects of development (culture, science, economy, etc.) and put the best interests of Africa first.
- South-South cooperation must be strengthened, with a view to achieving successful integration, through the creation of subregional African universities with a mission to serve Africa.

Sceptics may wonder whether all this is indeed possible and whether Africa has the resources to join other privileged guests at the "universal banquet". You have turned the spotlight on some examples. These are our "success stories". They give us grounds to say: "Yes, we can!"

- The success of Ethiopian Airlines, despite a challenging economic environment for civil aviation;
- Helios Energie, which is active in several African countries, and which has demonstrated that photovoltaic energy is a promising alternative for Africa. It is a cost-effective solution for such a sun-drenched continent;
- The Songhaï Centre, founded by Godfrey Nzamujo in Benin. This serves as a practical training centre for young agricultural entrepreneurs, a green economy incubator and a driving force behind national development efforts. A tripartite agreement has been signed between Benin, the United Nations Development Programme and the Songhaï Centre to make the Songhaï model available at the national and subregional levels in Africa's new dynamic economy;
- The silent revolution, led by Valentin Agon, the Beninese inventor of API-Palu, a patented malaria remedy that is a crucial development tool combating the depredations caused by malaria;
- Finally, in addition to these success stories, which can be found throughout Africa, we heard the story of Yiwu county in China, which made a successful switch from street vending to commerce on an industrial scale. This is convincing proof that success is within everyone's reach and that hope is a flame that must be fanned and is the raw material of every success story.

Lastly, with dignity and mutual respect for every participating entity, you have outlined the guiding principles that African States, and the rest of the world, must follow in their joint efforts.

Ten principles have been identified. They are included in their entirety in the conclusions of the fourth panel annexed to the present general report. You have made the recommendation that a group of experts be appointed by the African Union to determine the most suitable form in which to issue these principles.

In conclusion, what should we take away from your comments and exchanges?

- You have summoned forth the dream of an Africa that is united and strong, organized and integrated. A free Africa, purged of the grime and vestiges of a shameful past. An Africa that is finally its own, the rightful owner of its lands, in possession of a proper title to the land. An Africa that can face the world in the splendour of recapturing its deeper self, in the glow of rebirth, impatient to speak the truth and listen to what the rest of the world has to say.

- You have promised to break down the barriers of disdain and to dispel all those tired clichés according to which Africa is a scientific and technological desert, a Sahara resonating with nonsensical pagan chants and voodoo rites, unmoved by and indifferent to the powerful tide of scientific progress that bears up and pushes forward the winning countries.
- You have asked the most important questions. Who are we? Where are we going? What is the future, or multiple futures, that we want to build? What fundamental values underpin and support our efforts to change our lives and existence itself?
- You have clearly stated that it is not up to Africa to change so that Africans can reap the benefits of change. Rather, Africans need to summon the conviction and accept the need to change, so that Africa can, decisively and irreversibly, pursue change.
- We know we have the road map. But no one will give us the means to get to our destination. Those we will have to create ourselves.

We have left no stone unturned, nothing unsaid. We are ready to embark on the next fifty years. Ladies and Gentlemen, I ask, before we set out on this new road to the Africa of our dreams, that we heed the wise advice of this African proverb: "Drink the water to be beautiful. Soak up the sun to be strong. Look to the sky to grow tall".

Thank you for your kind attention.

Cotonou, 20 November 2010

Guiding principles for cooperation between African States and the rest of the world

The International Symposium Commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of African Independence, held in Cotonou from 16 to 20 November 2010 on the theme "Audacity: the only challenge for a new Africa", discussed the importance of cooperation agreements between African States and the rest of the world.

The Symposium believes that, in order to implement such agreements in a manner that maintains the dignity of the parties and mutual respect between them, it is important to adhere to certain broad guidelines, including the following:

1. African States should adopt principles of cooperation that are founded on the notion of partnership.
2. Partnerships should serve, above all else, the development goals that the African States have themselves identified.
3. The African Union should be given the responsibility for negotiating agreements on behalf of all African countries so that, from now on, Africa will speak with one voice.
4. In their quest to create a United States of Africa, the African States should emphasize multilateralism as the framework for their negotiations.
5. Any partnership agreement should take into account the needs of each party and each party's priorities.
6. Cooperation agreements should be based on protecting the explicitly stated mutual interests of the parties.
7. Partnership agreements should be implemented on the basis of shared responsibility between the parties and in accordance with the terms agreed.
8. Each partnership agreement should include provisions on human resources training and investment in human capital, in a spirit of give-and-take between parties.
9. Partnership agreements concluded by African States should include provisions on the preservation of the environment.
10. In developing partnership agreements, the African party should accommodate the concerns of civil society.

Cotonou, 20 November 2010

Recommendation

The Symposium proposes that the African Union should appoint a group of experts to articulate the above-mentioned principles in the most appropriate manner.

Youth message to Africa

Preamble

At the outset, we would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to make our voice — the voice of Africa's youth — heard.

As the theme of this symposium indicates, audacity is the only challenge for the new Africa.

In an increasingly challenging world, audacity is the solution for the African continent. Our beloved Africa — so beautiful and so rich, yet increasingly impoverished — needs new dynamics.

This Cotonou international symposium is of historic importance, because it has just laid the foundation for the new Africa of the next fifty years. It will help to produce a generation of proactive and bold leaders who must begin immediately to play their role in global growth and human progress.

Africa is us; Africa is you, our elders, our ancestors, our heroes, our veterans.

Africa's youth are bearing witness to, and now taking responsibility for, their history and their future.

We, the youth of Africa, the hope of the new Africa, must abandon the undesirable practices of the past fifty years in all areas of political, social and economic life.

Politics and immigration

Today, Africa is characterized by weak political systems which foster ubiquitous negative values such as corruption, misappropriation of public funds, plunder and unjust exploitation of raw materials, ethnocentricity, regionalism and human rights abuse.

There is also a woeful lack of future prospects for citizens of African countries, resulting in a high level of emigration — often under inhuman conditions — and a massive "brain drain".

Health, the economy and the environment

HIV, malaria and other pandemic diseases are decimating our people, in a context of limited means and misguided management of resources for combating these scourges.

From an economic perspective, monetary and regional integration — just like access to employment and food self-sufficiency — still seem insufficient.

The threat of climate change is also having a direct negative impact on people's lives and will intensify further if urgent action is not taken.

Education and culture

The educational system does not enable Africans to take back ownership of their cultures and does not seem adapted to the real needs of the continent. There are limited opportunities for discussion and mobility between students and teachers in

African universities. There are also few diversified opportunities for training and skills development, including opportunities outside conventional educational structures.

Considering the hurdles that must be overcome for Africa to achieve success 100 years after independence, its young people must promote the emergence of a visionary, patriotic and competent leadership inspired by fundamental values of development, including respect for the common good, equal opportunity, entrepreneurship and promotion of culture and civic engagement, in a peaceful environment.

In short, we undertake to lobby our respective States to ratify and implement the African Youth Charter, which has been ratified by only 22 countries since its adoption on 2 July 2006, even though it was drafted by representatives of Africa's youth and contains a series of recommendations in all areas of activity.

These hurdles can only be overcome with the support of our Heads of State, the African Union and all other regional integration structures.

To implement the solutions which we are proposing, we the youth, the inspiration for a new Africa, are firmly committed to restoring the culture of excellence, the only way of getting our continent back on track.

We fully understand the heavy responsibility that we bear — that of carrying the future of an entire continent on our shoulders.

We are the youth of today (...), but the elders of tomorrow ... The time will come when we too shall be held accountable and, when it does, we shall be given no quarter.

But to succeed, we should remember, as the saying goes, to use the end of the old rope to weave the new. We must celebrate the memory of all the men and women of Africa and the diaspora who led the fight for a dignified Africa. We need the support and guidance of our elders in our initiatives, such as the upcoming establishment of a permanent inter-generational forum.

The leadership torch which we are inheriting today will not be too heavy to bear.

Urgent action is needed.

Notwithstanding the disappointments embodied by endless and often unfulfilled promises, Africa's youth remain hopeful for a peaceful, independent and industrialized continent. On this point, they are united as one.

Message delivered by Marlyn Cristal Kessou
Spokesperson

Cotonou, 20 November 2010

Messages of support

The Cotonou International Symposium on the Fiftieth Anniversary of African Independence received messages of support from:

- the Government of China
 - the President of the United States of America
 - the President of France
 - the Secretary-General of the United Nations
 - the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference
 - His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI
 - the Secretary-General of the International Organization of La Francophonie.
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